

Developing Quality Culture in European Universities. The role of EUA.

*Towards a Comprehensive System for Quality Assurance of Higher Education in Lebanon.
UNESCO Palace. Beirut, 29 - 30 April, 2011.*

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theoria poiesis praxis

Structure of the presentation

- European level quality assurance developments
- European University Association, its work in quality assurance
- EUA's quality position
- Institutional Evaluation Programme

European Level Developments in QA

- The Berlin Communiqué in 2003 marked a major turning point by stating that
 - “consistent with the principle of institutional autonomy, the primary responsibility for quality assurance in higher education lies with each institution itself” and
 - Defined key characteristics of national QA systems
 - **E4 Group:** EUA, ESIB, EURASHE, ENQA

European situation: Overview (I)

■ **European Standards and Guidelines for the European Higher Education Area (ESG):**

- Internal quality processes in institutions
- External quality processes of institutions
- External quality processes of QA agencies

→ Risk: to view the ESG as checklist; they are not meant as norms, but as general principles

European situation: Overview (II)

- **Peer-review of QA agencies** (quality of QA agencies)

- **Register of QA agencies** operating in Europe
 - Register as structure for European dimension of quality in HE
 - Stakeholder involvement (higher education institutions, students, QA agencies, social partners and governments)

- **European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)** established in 2008

European situation: Overview (III)

- Different approaches when creating national quality assurance systems: (programme or institutional) accreditation, evaluations or audits
- Level of institutional autonomy in creating internal QA systems varies
- Countries and also institutions are in different phases in implementing institutional as well as national QA systems

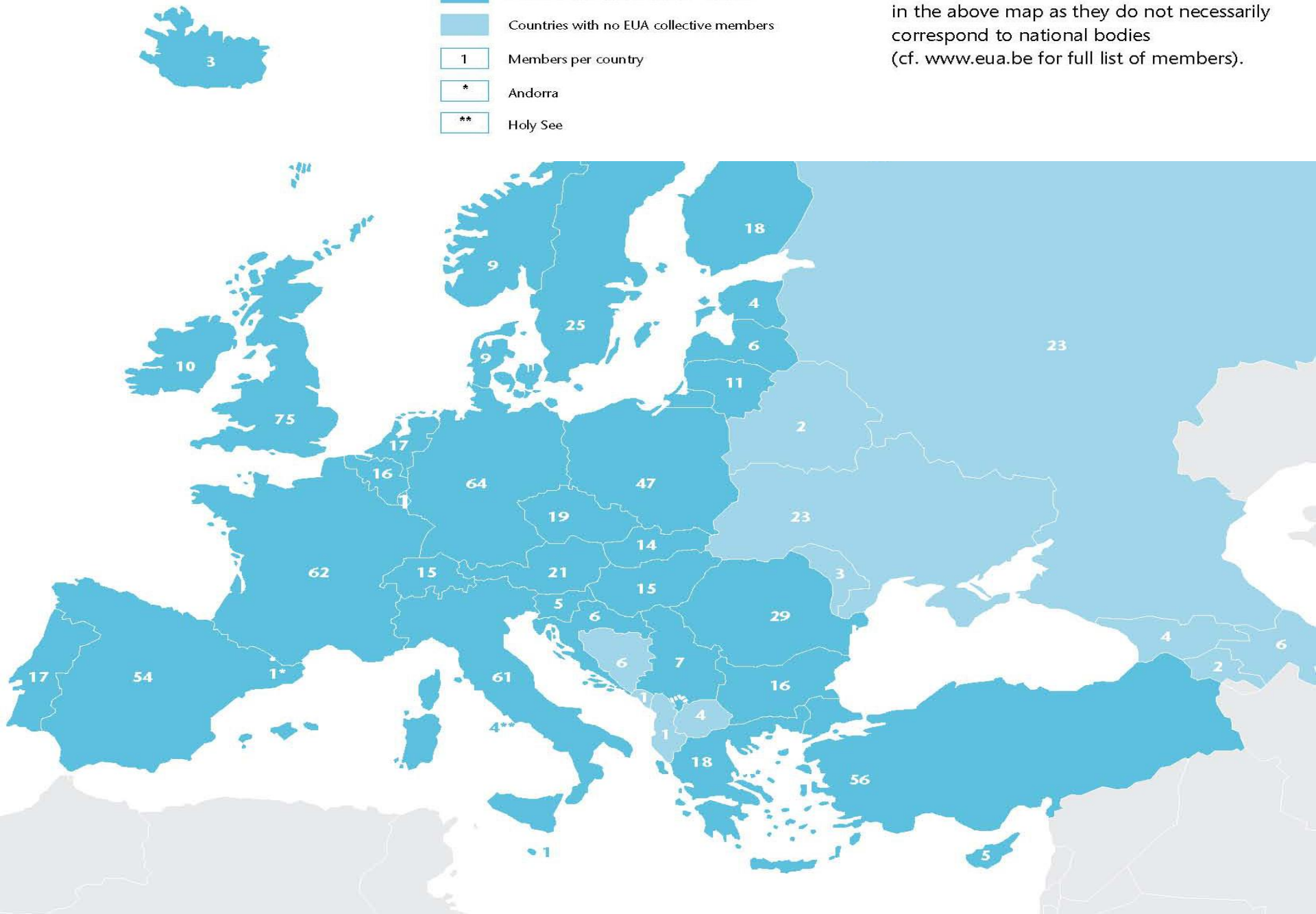
EUA at a glance

- 2001: establishment of EUA
 - a representative organisation of European universities & rectors' conferences
- Members:
 - 800 individual universities
 - 46 countries
 - 34 National Rectors' Conferences
- Independent Voice for the University Sector:
 - policy dialogue (focus: EHEA and ERA)
 - projects and surveys
 - services to its members (information, events)

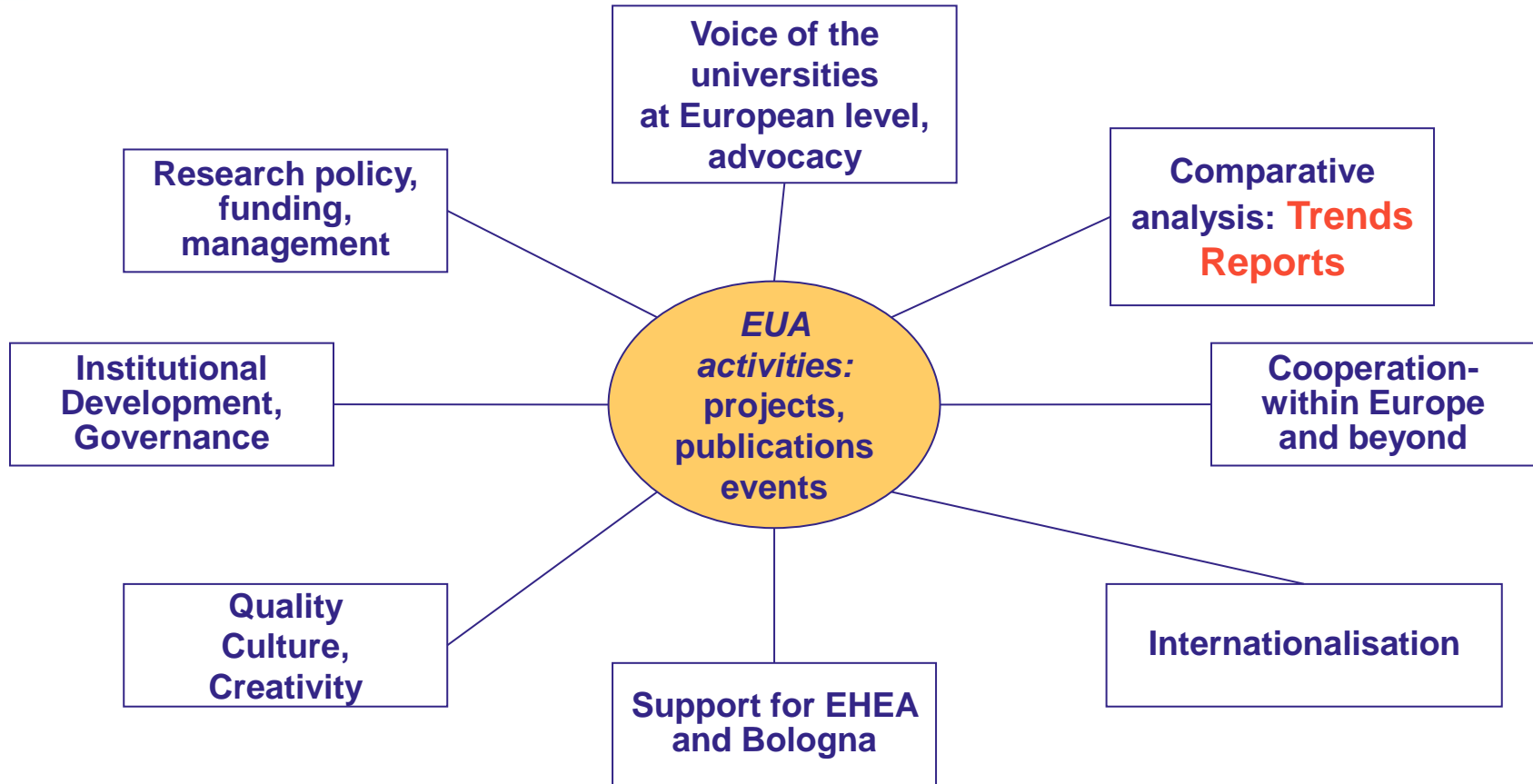
EUA Membership as of 10.04.2009

- Countries with EUA collective members
- Countries with no EUA collective members
- 1 Members per country
- * Andorra
- ** Holy See

EUA has 23 Affiliates. They are not integrated in the above map as they do not necessarily correspond to national bodies (cf. www.eua.be for full list of members).



Mission: Strengthen European Universities



**Serving the Interests of Members
European HEI in 46 countries**



EUA activities in QA (in short)

- Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)
- Projects e.g.:
 - Quality Culture, 2002-2006
 - European Masters New Evaluation Methodology (EMNEM), 2005-2006
 - Creativity project, 2006-2007
 - Quality Assurance for the Higher Education Change Agenda (QAHECA), 2008-2009
 - Examining Quality Culture in Higher Education Institutions (EQC), 2009-2011

EUA activities in QA (in short)

- Co-operation with ENQA, ESU and EURASHE (E4 group)
 - European Quality Assurance Forum
 - European Quality Assurance Register
- Workshops and other events on management etc.

Success factors of EUA's work on QA

- Bottom-up approach -> the policy positions developed through a dialogue with the universities
 - IEP since 1994
 - Projects (Quality culture etc.) engaging members
 - For ex. in EQAF the opportunity of sharing experiences at grassroots level considered essential
- Co-operation with other key stakeholders, namely students and QA agencies, at policy level
- Tools used to disseminate good practices: projects, organising events, publications, presentations in various events

EUA's policy positions on QA

- Main responsibility for QA lies with the institutions
- Context sensitive (institutional and disciplinary diversity)
- Fitness for purpose approach
- Enhancement oriented
- Internal and external evaluations or QA processes should be complementary
- Transparency and co-operation

Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)

- Focus on institution as a whole:
 - ✓ Decision-making processes, institutional structures and effectiveness of strategic planning
 - ✓ Relevance of internal quality processes and the degree to which their outcomes are used in decision making and strategic management as well as perceived gaps in these internal mechanisms. As part of this larger framework the evaluations address the issues on internal quality assurance identified by the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG).

Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP)

- Recommendations on the institutional structures, processes, policies and culture, enabling them to perform the full range of their activities (research, teaching and learning and service to society).

IEP: Methodology

- Examination of short and long term objectives
- Examination of external and internal constraints, as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- Recommendation of strategies to improve the quality of the institution

IEP: Methodology

- No standardised solution nor imperative proposals, but support to the institution for improvement.
- Not a pass or fail conclusion

→ *Contributes to the dynamics of development and evaluates the University's **capacity for change***

IEP: 4 key questions

- What is the institution trying to do?
- How is the institution trying to do it?
- How does it know that it works?
- How does the institution change in order to improve?

IEP: process

- Institutional self-evaluation process that results in a self-evaluation report
- Two site visits by the IEP evaluation team
 - Team consists of current or former rectors or vice-rectors, one student and a team coordinator who is HE professional
- Oral report delivered by the team at the end of the second site visit
- Written final report that is published on IEP web-site
- Institutional follow-up activities
- Optional follow-up evaluation 2-4 years later

Lessons learnt from IEP and other QA activities

- A single set of standards for HE is not desirable since it clashes with the need to have an innovative and diverse HE sector
- But it is important that each institution is clear about its own standards
- And that each institution is (externally) evaluated in the context of its standards

Coordinated Evaluations

- Ireland
 - Catalonia
 - Slovakia
 - Portugal
 - Romania
-
- Turkey Sectoral report

Further information

www.eua.be

Thanks you for your attention

